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Church planters meet to train, network

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Willow Pointe Church in Hattiesburg hosted the first-ever Mississippi Missional Leadership Conference April 28 to bring together Mississippi Baptists' diverse church planters and send them away with new tools to help reach Mississippi for Jesus.

According to Ed Deuschle, director of the Church Planting Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, the conference targeted church planters, ethnic leaders, and other affinity groups interested in networking for missional effectiveness. Approximately 35 people participated in the conference.

"Our church planters are excited about the thought of being able to partner with other planters, discussing missional strategies, and determining how they can best impact Mississippi," Deuschle said. "This is a historical event in that it is the first time we've been able to pull our planters together to get them to think together missionally. They are getting to know people they didn't even know."

The event was a joint project between the North American Mission Board (NAMB), the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), Willow Pointe Church, and Lamar Association.

With such an ambitious conference, leaders were diverse. Fred Wolfe, director of BARNABAS: A Ministry of Encouragement, and pastor/church planter in Mobile, AL, led in two worship services and also in one breakout conference. His session, The Externally Focused Church, dealt with leading churches to mobilize laity to focus externally to meet community needs and share God's love through mission focused activities.

John H. Bailey of NAMB serves as leader of the Missional Networks Team. His conferences, Partnering Church Networks and EPOCH: The

Time Has Come to Live Like a Missionary, dealt with exploring ways that churches can work together to advance the Kingdom of God in their communities, and how basic missionary principles can be used by individuals, small groups, and missionary teams to network for evangelism, start small groups, and develop new leaders.

Kraig Kelsey, executive director of PLACE ministries in Cumming, Ga., discussed how intentional principles can be used to increase volunteerism in churches. Randy Ferguson, who serves on the Resource Development and Delivery Team for the Church Planting Group at NAMB, led a session on making disciples and developing leaders.

Of special note were the ethnic conferences. Bob Sena, who serves on the Strategic Readiness Team in the area of field partner services for NAMB, led a conference in Church Planter Networks, dealing with the role of networks, why they are needed, why planters should be part of them, and how to decide in what networks to participate. Sena offered this conference in Spanish, along with Jess Fairbanks, Hispanic People Groups Coordinator for NAMB. Sena and Fairbanks also led in a Hispanic church planters dialogue.

Dino Senesi, formerly affiliated with the South Carolina Baptist Convention on their church planting team, currently serves as a mentor, coach, and organizer of Church Planter Networks. He led the same conference for networks as did Sena and Fairbanks.

"This conference pointed out the diversity of our Baptist churches in Mississippi," Deuschle said. "To reach Mississippi will take all sorts of people."

"Look at our Hispanic participants," Deuschle continued. "We offered three hours of training

with John Bailey, who taught how to organize networks. Our Hispanic fellowship met for five hours, with leaders from across the state. It was a real plus to have Sena and Fairbanks work with them in their own language."

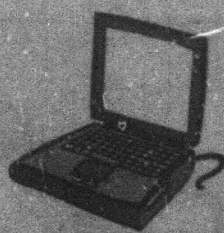
One primary thrust of the conference was the role of networks in North America. According to Bailey, networks are reshaping leaders and churches all across North America. Driven by a quest for peer-to-peer learning opportunities, relationships, and mission partnerships, planters and pastors alike are seeking networking opportunities to enhance their capacity to lead their churches and fulfill their callings. A growing number of leaders are willing to invest time and money in order to interact with their peers under the guidance of an individual who brings immediate help or has the ability to assist them in their journey. Networks are built on four convictions: First, that Scripture commands to make disciples of all peoples; second, that North America is a mission field; third, that the church is God's chosen vehicle for taking the Gospel to the nations; and fourth, that the church's mission assignment is a God-sized task that can only be accomplished by His supernatural power and in cooperation with other Acts 1:8 partners.

"We hope that this is the first of many other events," said Deuschle. "We'd like to have regional network gatherings in the future."

For more information on this conference and the work of the Church Planting Department, contact Deuschle at (601) 292-3361 or toll free outside Jackson at (800) 748-1651, ext. 224; email edeuschle@mbcb.org. For information on church planting networks, visit NAMB's website, www.churchplantingvillage.net.



UNITY IN DIVERSITY — The diversity of Mississippi Baptists is seen in this informal photograph of several church planters, ethnic workers, and other missional church leaders assembled at Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg, for the Mississippi Missional Leadership Conference April 28. (Photo by Tony Martin)



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That smell isn't coming from the tourists

Most of us remember the remarks of patrician U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid upon the December 2 opening of the Capitol Visitor Center (CVC) near the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.:

In the summertime, because (of) the high humidity and how hot it gets here, you could literally smell the tourists coming into the Capitol, and that may be descriptive but it's true. Well, that is no longer going to be necessary.

Reid's candid assessment of the people who paid for the magnificent facility was the unfortunate highlight of the grand opening. Now there's another unfortunate highlight.

"For months, widespread reports of a scrubbing of references to our religious heritage from the CVC have been circulating. I received firsthand confirmation upon my visit. The six-year, \$621 million project, a 580,000-square-foot underground complex beneath the eastern side of the Capitol, might best be described as an insult to our nation's rich religious heritage and our founding fathers' acknowledgment of and reliance upon God," wrote Doug Carlson, a staffer in the Washington, D.C. office of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, which is headquartered in Nashville.

"To be certain not to overlook anything, I inquired of multiple CVC staff whether the center includes references to our nation's religious heritage. The four echoed similar refrains: 'No, not really. I don't think it includes anything,'" Carlson wrote. "Whether the whitewashing of our religious heritage has been careless oversight or calculated

maneuvering, an undercurrent by some contingents to expel all things religious from the public square is evident."

Among the items of religious heritage listed as missing from the CVC by Carlson is the text of the Pledge of Allegiance, which contains the phrase, "One nation, under God." He also reports that a CVC engraving had to be quickly plastered over because "E Pluribus Unum" (Latin for "Out of the Many, One") was described as the Nation's Motto.

"In God We Trust," of course, is the Nation's Motto, officially replacing "E Pluribus Unum" by an act of Congress more than 50 years ago.

Rick Tyler, founding director of Renewing American Leadership in Washington, D.C., wrote in the March 2009 issue of Focus on the Family's publication Citizen that at least one document on display omits the original wording, "...in the year of our Lord..." All the document's other wording is accurate, but "...in the year of our Lord..." is absent.

"Missing from the CVC is Benjamin Franklin's call to prayer at the Constitutional Convention, presidential proclamations calling our nation to days of prayer, fasting, thanksgiving, and remembrance and most significantly demonstrated in the close of the Declaration of Independence where the (signers) make an appeal to the 'Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of



NOW OPEN — Emancipation Hall during December 2, 2008, opening ceremonies of the new Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, D.C. (Special photo courtesy of Architect of the Capitol)

(their) intentions' and declare 'with a Firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor,'" wrote Tyler.

How could the planners of this massive recounting of American history accidentally leave out so many religious references that are so important to the development of this country? The answer is — it couldn't have been unintentional.

There are forces in America today that would like nothing better than to wipe away all references to religion from this country's public life and discourse, and those forces are growing. That's not alarmist; that's a fact. The CVC scandal is proof.

When will we have the boldness to assert the truth that we are, indeed, "One nation, under God?" Hopefully we'll stand up and be counted before it's too late, but time is slipping away.

Hate crimes bill could put Christians in crosshairs

WASHINGTON, D.C. (BP and local reports) — The U.S. House of Representatives easily approved hate crimes protections for homosexuals and transgendered individuals that opponents believe could seriously hinder religious freedom.

The House voted 249-175 for the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, H.R. 1913, which would add "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to the current categories — such as race, religion, and national origin — that are protected from hate crimes.

Sexual orientation includes homosexuality, while gender identity, or transgendered status, takes in transsexuals and cross-dressers.

The strong House majority supporting the bill consisted of 231 Democrats and 18 Republicans. Seventeen Democrats joined 158 GOP members in voting against the measure.

Mississippi Democratic Congressman Bennie Thompson voted in favor of the legislation, while Mississippi Democratic Congressmen Travis Childers

and Gene Taylor voted against the measure as did Republican Greg Harper. Childers and Harper are members of Mississippi Baptist churches.

The legislation awaits action in the Senate, which passed a similar measure in 2007. President Obama has indicated he will sign the bill if it reaches his desk.

Evangelical Christian and conservative leaders expressed dismay over the April 29 vote. They warn the legislation, when combined with existing law, could cause problems for Christians who espouse the biblical teaching that homosexual behavior and other sexual relations outside marriage are sinful.

For instance, if a person commits a violent act based on a victim's sexual orientation after hearing the Bible's teaching that homosexual behavior is a sin, the teacher or preacher could be charged with inducing a person to commit the crime, some critics of the legislation say.

"Make no mistake about it — the House of Representatives has voted to condemn the belief that homosexuality and many other

biblically offensive sexual behaviors are contrary to God's design," said Barrett Duke, vice president for public policy at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville.

"No one should engage in acts of violence against someone merely because he is a homosexual, but neither should a person's religiously held beliefs about homosexuality serve as grounds for federal prosecution," Duke said.

Supporters of the legislation deny it would target religious freedom and free-speech rights. The bill includes language saying it will not "be construed to prohibit any expressive conduct protected from legal prohibition by, or any activities protected by the Constitution."

Some evangelicals — such as Joel Hunter, a former United Methodist minister and current pastor of 12,000-member Northland Church Distributed, in Orlando, Fla.; ethics professor David Gushee of Mercer University in Macon, Ga., which claims a Baptist identity; and Sojourners

President Jim Wallis — issued endorsements on the day the bill was approved.

"I would think that the followers of Jesus would be first in line to protect any group from hate crimes," Hunter said in a release issued by Faith in Public Life, a left-leaning organization promoting faith in the public arena. "This bill protects both the rights of conservative religious people to voice passionately their interpretations of their scriptures and protects their fellow citizens from physical attack."

The legislation would authorize the U.S. attorney general to provide assistance to state and local officials in the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes. The bill says a hate crime is one "motivated by prejudice based on the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability of the victim or is a violation of the State, local, or Tribal hate crime laws."

The penalty for a hate crime could be as much as 10 years in prison or, in some cases, up to a life sentence.

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Panel sees more persecution around world

WASHINGTON (BP) — An additional countries deserve recognition as violators of religious freedom, a bipartisan federal panel said in its annual report May 1. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), which counts as one of its commissioners Richard Land, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission at the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, recommended that the State Department name Nigeria as one of its "countries of particular concern" (CPCs), a designation reserved for foreign governments that have participated in or tolerated "particularly severe" violations of religious liberty. The commission also added six countries to its "watch list" — Laos, Russia, Malia, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Venezuela. USCIRF names countries to its watch list that do not reach the level of CPCs but "require close monitoring due to the nature and extent" of abuses of religious freedom. Other governments already on the watch list were those of Afghanistan, Belarus, Cuba, Egypt, and Indonesia. Nigeria joins 12 other countries previously recommended by the commission for CPC designation: Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. Though USCIRF makes rec-

ommendations for the CPC list, only the State Department gives countries that designation. Outgoing Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice named only eight countries as CPCs in January: Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Uzbekistan.

The commission expressed its dissatisfaction with the implementation by both Democratic and Republican administrations of some provisions of the 1998 law that established USCIRF and the State Department office regarding international religious liberty. It cited the naming of only eight CPCs and the sanctioning of only Eritrea exclusively under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA).

In addition, two other CPCs received waivers from the Bush administration preventing penalties.

"The commission hopes that the new administration will take a new approach to presidential actions under IRFA, ending the practice of relying on pre-existing, already existing, sanctions that do not address the specific freedom abuses," USCIRF Chair Felice Gaer said at a Washington news conference.

IRFA requires the president to take specific actions regarding governments designated as CPCs. He is provided a range of options, from diplomacy to economic sanctions. The president also has the authority to waive any action.

Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., a human rights leader in Congress, said the commission's report shows religious freedom "is under attack around the world, and the situation is getting worse."

"The U.S. cannot turn away from its leadership on these issues," he said in a written statement. "Human rights should be a top priority in U.S. foreign policy, but the early signs are that the new administration will downgrade it."

President Obama's State Department has been "abandoning religious freedom, or at best de-emphasizing it," Smith said.

The commission added Nigeria to its list of CPC recommendations after it "concluded the government was tolerating" religious violence, USCIRF member Leonard Leo said at the news conference. "There has been an unbroken chain of sectarian and communal violence the government has not addressed," he told reporters.

USCIRF commissioners and staff visited the African country on a fact-finding trip in March and April.

The Iraqi government, which USCIRF placed back on its CPC-recommended list in December, has tolerated "ongoing, severe abuses of religious freedom," especially against Christians and other religious minorities, commissioner Nina Shea said.

While overall violence has diminished in Iraq, incidents against religious minorities have continued, she said, noting that about half of the Christian community of 1.4 million people has fled Iraq or been killed in recent years.

Of Iran, Richard Land said, "[G]overnment rhetoric and actions worsened conditions for nearly all non-Shi'a [Muslim] religious groups, most notably for the Baha'is, as well as the Sufi Muslims, evangelical Christians and members of the Jewish community."

In September, Iran's government initiated an attempt to invoke capital punishment

for apostasy, said Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. If it is approved, "members of many minority communities could be subject to death sentences," he said.

Pakistan, where Taliban-affiliated forces are making advances, has been recommended for CPC designation every year since 2002 without State Department agreement, commissioner Elizabeth Prodromou said.

The "threat to freedom of religion or belief in Pakistan has demonstrably increased," she told reporters. Pakistanis are still being murdered during worship, and females are "denied equal protection under the law," she said.

The commission reported success with one of its former watch list countries. It removed Bangladesh from the list because national elections during the last year were not marked by anti-minority violence, as had been true in the past. Also, the prime minister has promised to protect the rights of religious minorities and to rescind discriminatory policies, commissioner Michael Cromartie said at the news conference.

USCIRF withheld a report on India, which was plagued by anti-Christian violence in the state of Orissa last year. The commission plans to travel to India for the first time in June in order to gain information for its report, commissioner Talal Eid said.

The commission's responsibility is to advise the administration and Congress regarding the conditions for religious liberty overseas. The president selects three members of the panel, while congressional leaders name the other six.

The State Department's ambassador at large for international religious freedom serves as a non-voting member of the commission. An ambassador has yet to be named in the Obama administration.

USCIRF's report may be accessed online at www.uscifr.gov.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Parents victorious

MT. JULIET, Tenn. (BP) — In a victory for a group of five Christian parents, a federal judge issued a preliminary injunction May 1 preventing a Tennessee elementary school from censoring posters advertising the popular National Day of Prayer and See You at the Pole events. The order by U.S. District Judge Robert L. Echols comes days before the May 7 National Day of Prayer observance and more than seven months after a controversy began when officials with Lakeview Elementary School in Mt. Juliet, Tenn., prevented certain posters advertising last September's See You at the Pole to be displayed as submitted. Advised by an assistant principal, who said the posters violated district policy, the parents covered up Bible verses as well as phrases such as, "In God We Trust," and "God Bless America." The assistant principal says she remembers seeing only Bible verses and not the other phrases when she told the parents that the posters couldn't be displayed as printed. The Christian legal organization Alliance Defense subsequently sued the school on behalf of the parents, claiming the school's actions — as well as the school's policy — violated the parents' First and Fourteenth Amendment rights. The school's policy requires the posters to state only the time, place, date, and location of the event and also to get pre-approval from a school administrator, usually the principal or the director of schools, before a poster is displayed. In his injunction order, Echols said the parents likely would succeed in a trial. "Simply issuing or permitting a communication involving a religious organization during school hours does not render the communication state speech, nor does it invariably create a perception of endorsement or coercion by government officials," Echols wrote, referencing the parents' posters and citing a Fourth Circuit ruling.

Looking back

10 years ago

Hondurans struggling to feed their families in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch are once again in need of Mississippi Baptists' help, according to the leaders of the state convention's disaster relief efforts.

20 years ago

Centrists tout a get-out-the-vote campaign for Daniel Vestal, candidate for president at the 1989 Southern Baptist Convention in Las Vegas, during the "Here We Stand" symposium in Nashville. The meeting was sponsored by Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention.

50 years ago

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly is the new name of the Henderson Point assembly property in Pass Christian, recently purchased by the Mississippi Baptist Convention, according to Chester L. Quarles, executive secretary.

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By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
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Clue: Z = K

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Amos Three:Four

KIDS FOR SALE: A Special Mother's Day Thought

Every day we are bombarded with advertising. Somebody is trying to get our attention in a newspaper, on TV, radio, billboards, or a popup ad on a computer screen. All of them intended to try to get you to act, buy, or change your attitude. I read in an article that each day we are confronted with about 1700 advertisements trying to get our attention. Now I am not sure who did that study or how they came up with the 1700 figure, but it seems to me that there are a lot more ads than that screaming for me to look, listen, or be engaged in some way.

The other day I passed by one such sign advertising something that I had never seen before and it got my attention. My mind began to race as I wondered what in the world was happening. To help you understand what I came across, let me paint the sign for you in words. It was a plywood board and it was rather narrow and tall. Somebody had taken spray paint and in a vertical presentation the sign said, 4 SALE KIDS.

There was something, another word beneath "kids," but I could not quite make out what it was at first, so all that my brain processed was 4 SALE KIDS. My initial sympathetic thought was that some mother was having a bad day. The kids were not behaving. Maybe all of them decided at the same time



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

to be in a bad humor, so I concluded that she just pulled out a piece of plywood and a can of spray paint, fixed her sign, and stuck it out there in the front yard. As I was thinking about all of that, I noticed the fourth word and made out what those letters spelled TOYS. Then I was able to see the whole picture: 4 SALE KIDS' TOYS.

Quickly, I changed my mind about the poor momma or daddy. I realized that the kids who live at that house apparently were not as bad as I thought they were. As I reflected on what I thought I saw, I realized that for moms and dads who are living with the pressures of parenting it is never an easy thing to birth children and give them structure, direction, love, care, information, and emotional influence all at the same time. For most of us, even if you have only one child, there are days when you want to get out the plywood and make a sign. Of course, on the other side of that issue there are the kids who no doubt even in the best of homes at times want to get out their plywood board and make their sign, 4 SALE PARENTS.

Regardless, whether you are the child, parent, or the grand-

parent, life in this complicated world of relationships is not easy. In fact, it is so difficult that at times it is easier to think in terms of just getting rid of the others. Sell off the kids, put your mate on the auction block, find a buyer for your parents, and be done with it. For every relationship, there can come some moment, some experience, and some deal breaker kind of event that makes you want to shuck it all and start all over.

Now the fact is that you see that happening constantly. You see it in the alienation of parents and children. That is not good! You see it in divorce action where we will just legally extract a person from our lives and that is not good. While in the Christian faith we may not focus on this near enough, the fact is that God's Word would point us in a different direction.

The Bible has much to say about us in our human and family relationships. It tells us that we need to love one another, forgive one another, and do not exasperate each other. You may know the buttons to push that will set someone off whether it is a child, parent, or your mate. You can even deny that you are punching that button, but you know and God knows. You are not playing games with Him.

The on-going internal struggles with any or all relationships

in life can drive us to desperation and then we make decisions that in hindsight may not be the best long-term actions to take. I remember reading about a want ad that appeared in the paper that said something like this: **FOR SALE** — fishing boat and trailer, almost new set of expensive golf clubs, two deer rifles, a shotgun, and one barely used four-wheeler. All items extremely cheap. It listed the phone number to call and then it said, if a man answers, hang up! Obviously, something interesting was going on in that relationship.

How do we face life and maintain relationships without being driven to painting the **FOR SALE** sign and sticking it in the front yard? Here are just a few simple suggestions:

(1) Try to avoid being gruff. Whoever the person may be or whatever the relationship is, listen to Scripture when it says, "Be ye kind, one to another" (Eph. 4:32).

(2) Attempt to measure the aspects of your relationship so that you will not be pushed into that place called "enough." Such marvelous fruits of the Spirit as gentleness, meekness, and temperance can enable you to avoid having your enough meter pushed to enough is enough.

(3) Ask God to help you to love others beyond stuff. One of the twisted aspects of our world is that we love stuff and use people rather than vice versa — or to state it another way, recognize the value in the ultimate worth of a child, a mate, or a relative so that you will deepen your appreciation for them and choose not to put them up for sale.

The author can be contacted at jfutral@mbcb.org.

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MUSIC MINISTER: COVENANT Baptist Church, Collierville, Tenn., a conservative church with a traditional worship style, is seeking a full-time minister of music. Resumes will be accepted until June 15, 2009. You may mail your resume to personnel committee, Covenant Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1165, Collierville, TN 38027 or email to drsam@covenantontheweb.org.

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ASSOCIATE PASTOR IN TAIWAN. Grace Baptist Church in Taipei Taiwan is seeking a full-time associate pastor for its large, growing English-language congregation. For more information or to send resumes, contact Nick Brideson at nbrideson@hotmail.com.

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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

May 7, 2009

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

2009 Family Celebrations

FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!

Saturday, May 9

Neshoba Baptist Association Family Life Center

For contact information:

neshobabaptistassociation@yahoo.com or call 662-289-4294

Saturday, May 16

Williamsville Baptist Church, Kosciusko

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

For contact information:

662-289-4293 or E-mail Altala Baptist Association at
abaamdbw@bellsouth.net

For all boys and girls
who have
completed
grades 3-7

Cost \$110
with
\$55 deposit

For info:
Discipleship &
Family Ministry
Department

601-292-3387
dhicks@mcbcb.org

**BIBLE
DRILL CAMP**
JUNE 29 - JULY 1, 2009
CENTRAL HILLS BAPTIST RETREAT

2009 STATE SINGLES RETREAT

May 16 & 17

Central Hills, Kosciusko

30th Anniversary

Theme: "Single Life with a Plus"

To register call 1-800-748-1651, ext. 216. Or
mail fee to MBCB Conference Ministry Office,
PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205.



REFRESH

You are Invited to FOCUS ON KINGDOM ESSENTIALS

Refresh is a church leadership training conference for pastors, bi-vocational ministers, church staff leaders and volunteer workers who are interested in sharpening skills and finding spiritual refreshment. The one-day format preserves your time and maximizes your opportunity to choose courses of interest. Look over the shortlist that follows and get detailed information from your Associational Missions Director, or on the Web at www.mcbcb.org. Click on the REFRESH link. Cost: \$10 which will include lunch. Preregistration is not required.

Speakers and Topics

Spiritual Growth
& Pastoral Ministry

T.W. Hunt

The Personal and
Spiritual Growth of a Leader

Lavon Gray

Ministers of Music

Tommy King

Balancing a Bi-Vocational
Ministry and LifeStyle

Tony Merida

The Nuts and Bolts of
Preparing for Sunday

Steve Stone

Knowing and Doing
the Will of God

Church Growth & Missions

Tammy Anderson...Family Mission Projects

Peggy Brock...Leading a Child to Faith in Christ

Steve Davis...Deacons in Ministry

Rick Howerton...Small Group Ministry

Mike McCool...The Innovative Church

George Ross...The Need for Planting Churches in a
Church Culture

Rick Sawyer...Building Bridges to Reach the Unchurched in Your Community

Wade Steelman...Mentoring Church Leaders and
Initiating a Mentoring Launch

Cindy Townsend...Refresh Your Women's Ministry

Gastón Romero...VIDA DEVOTIONAL

Age-Group Ministry

Ann Edwards...Current Trends in Preschool Ministry

Angie Boydston...Current Trends in Children's Ministry

Rick Morton...Current Trends in Youth Ministry

Jason Hayes...Current Trends in Young Adult Ministry

Alan Raughton...Current Trends for Reaching

Boomers and Busters



Don Wilton
Keynote Speaker
Pastor, FBC
Spartanburg, SC



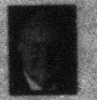
T.W. Hunt
Noted Author
and
Prayer Warrior



Lavon Gray
Music Pastor
FBC
Jackson, MS



Tony Merida
Teaching Pastor
Temple BC
Hattiesburg, MS



Tommy King
President
William Carey
University

All 1st-6th grade children who are coming with their parents to the Refresh Conference at Temple Baptist Church on Saturday, May 30, are invited to participate in a Missions Extravaganza. We are going on an imaginary journey to several countries in the Pacific Rim. In each country, we will hear a missionary story and make a craft.

Come join us on this incredible adventure on the Orient Express!

Child care will be available at no cost for all preschoolers who are coming with their parents by the Preschool Ministry Department at Temple Baptist Church. There is no cost for the child care or the Missions Extravaganza, however preregistration is required. The deadline to register is Friday, May 15, 2009. To register for the Missions Extravaganza or child care, please call Diane Howell in the Preschool Ministry Department at Temple Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, at 601-450-3069.

HOTEL INFORMATION • Microtel Inn • (601) 450-1592

105 Westover Drive, Hattiesburg, MS • 39402

Ask for Group Code Title: REFRESH Conference

(Hotel is located just west of I-59 at Exit 65 on the north side of Highway 98)

Sponsored by: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Temple Baptist Church, LifeWay Christian Resources and Your Local Association.



Joseph Adams
UM
South Asia



Carla Aguilar
UM
N Africa/Mid East



PJ Aguilar
UM
Pac Rim



Robin Alexander
ICC
South Asia



Brittany Allen
MC
Pac Rim



Emily Ambos
UM
Mississippi



Kat Atkins
GCCC
Pac Rim



Margaret Bean
UM
Pac Rim



Danielle Beasley
WCU
Africa



Josh Beckham
UM
Pac Rim



Kristin Bennett
MERIDIAN
Pac Rim



Endrean Bond
BMC
Mississippi



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Chelsea Burts
MSU
South Asia



Doris Bynum
MC
California



Chase Caldwell
MC
South Asia



Damian Carlu
BMC
Maryland



Cassie Clayton
USM
Pac Rim



Jamie Coleman
BMC
Mississippi



Heath Conner
WCU
Colorado



Matthew Cook
MSU
Canada



Clayton Cooley
JCJC
Pac Rim



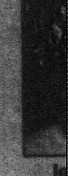
Willis Covington
SMCC
West Africa



Hunter Coy
UM
Pac Rim



Kaitlin Estel
JCJC
Maryland



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Christine Finley
USM
Mississippi



Phil Fortenberry
MSU
South Asia



Michele Fortune
BMC
Oklahoma



Amber Fountain
WCU
Louisiana



Kayla Frazier
UM
Pac Rim



Rhiana Garrett
UM
South America



Emily Gasson
UM
N Africa/Mid East



Jason Gauli
SMCC
Pac Rim



Haley Geeslin
NWCC
Maine



Elise Gibbs
ECCC
California



Nicole Glicrease
WCU
N Africa/Mid East



Cyndi Godbold
SMCC
Tennessee



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Brittany Herndon
MUW
South Dakota



Amanda Higgs
MC
Arizona



Drew Jackson
CO-LIN
S America



Faith Johns
CO-LIN
Mississippi

HERE AM I. SEND ME.

PICK 5 OF US AND PRAY FOR US ALL SUMMER

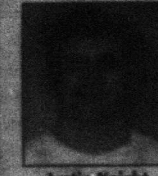
BSU MISSIONS



Sydney Kirk
MC
Pac Rim



Maggie Kleppinger
SMCC
Pac Rim



Justin Knight
JCJC
Pac Rim



Kevin Kyzar
USM
Mississippi



Cory Lamb
UM
Arizona



Josh Lawrence
UM
N Africa/Mid East



Heather Layton
WCU
Pac Rim



Aaron Ledbetter
ICC
Pac Rim



Daniel Locke
UM
Tennessee



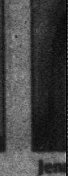
Claire Lusk
MC
Illinois



Chris Magee
MSU
C&E Europe



Barbara Mlinsh
2CMINDS
Pac Rim



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Ashley McMillen
WCU
Canada



Matt Metcalf
UM
Pac Rim



Brittany Miller
NWCC
South Carolina



Jennifer Miller
MC
Texas



Jennifer Mitchell
MC
Montana



Rebekah Moore
MSU
Pac Rim



Sarah Mordica
USM
C&E Europe



Jesse Morea
SMCC
Pac Rim



Thati Moreira
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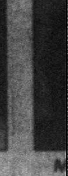
Tara Morgan
MSU
Texas



Clint Morris
NWCC
California



Emily Morrison
MUM
S America



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Lauren Patton
ICC
Montana



Bruce Peters
ICC
Pac Rim



Kate Poore
MSU
Pac Rim



Adam Preston
BMC
Iowa



Nicki Prickett
USM
Pac Rim



Kyle Reeder
ICC
S America



Tina Register
MSU
Pac Rim



Beth Rhodes
MSU
Illinois



Travis Roaten
ICC
Pac Rim



Michal Roberson
BMC
Kansas



Danielle Roberts
WCU
Colorado



Delaina Roberts
UWCU
California



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Mamie Shannon
ECCC
Nevada



Tracey Slaco
UM
Maryland



Kolby Simon
ECCC
South Asia



Austin Smith
MSU
N Africa/Mid East



Chris Smith
UM
S America



Heather Smith
SMCC
Pac Rim



Jason Smitherman
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Hunter Speeg
CO-LIN
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Ryan Spencer
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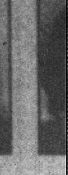
Corey Springer
MC
Tennessee



Logan Strachan
BMC
Canada



Wilton Hibbs
MC
S Africa



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Tony Vitagliano
ICC
Maine



Aaron Walker
CO-LIN
Colorado



Eric Walker
MC
East Asia



Joshua Warren
NWCC
New Mexico



Justin Watson
NECC
Mississippi



Shellee Watson
WCU
Minnesota



Aaron White
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Canada



Margaret Widup
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East Asia



Danielle Williams
MC
East Asia



Chelsea Wilson
MSU
Pac Rim



Tiffany Woodham
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Colorado



Ann Marie Wright
UWCU
California



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Bobba Boggs
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Pac Rim



Amanda Boiling
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Hayley Boyd
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Stephanie Boyd
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Samuel Branch
SMCC
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Hannah Brancheau
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Zack Brent
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Seth Brill
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Megan Brumfield
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Laura Bullock
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Nick Bullock
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Josh Culley
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Florida



Ashli Cripples
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N Africa/Mid East



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Kimi Denton
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MERIDIAN
West Africa



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Christine Ellis
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Eric English
MSU
S America



Callie Graham
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Pac Rim



Ashley Grant
ICC
Pac Rim



Lizzie Gray
NWCC
Pac Rim



Kyla Greer
HINDS
Pac Rim



Mitch Gunn
CCCC
Canada



Courtney Hamil
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S America



Gretchen Harris
NWCC
California



Jamar Harris
MS DELTA
Massachusetts



Melanie Hays
CO-LIN
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Maria Hedden
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Chelsea Helms
DSU
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Robbie Hill
SMCC
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Tiffany Hodge
PKCC
Pac Rim



Kenna Holloway
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Jessica Hudson
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Rob Hunt
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Jordan Ingram
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Amanda Johnson
MSU
N Africa/Mid East



Katie Johnson
USM
Pac Rim



Holly Jones
SMCC
Pac Rim



Amanda Jordan
MSU
N Africa/Mid East



Aletta Joslin
MC
N Africa/Mid East



Drew Joslin
MSU
Central Asia



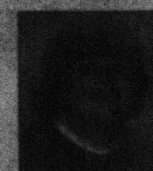
Nick Kelsoe
USM
East Asia



Kat Kendall
WCU
Massachusetts



Jennifer Matthews
MSU
Canada



Scott Mathews
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Pac Rim



Claire Mattox
ICC
Nevada



John Paul McCarty
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West Africa



Josh McCormick
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South Asia



Amanda McCullough
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Pac Rim



Preston McDaniel
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Krista McFeeters
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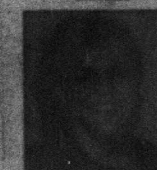
Ashley McGee
ICC
California



Gabby McGintey
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Chephra McKee
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S America



Mindy Morton
BMC
C&E Europe



Katharine Mullins
MC
Africa



Amber Neal
MSU
Pac Rim



Ben Nesbit
MSU
Texas



Crystal Newsome
USM
Tennessee



Blake Nobles
WCU
N Africa/Mid East



Jordan Norris
BMC
Illinois



Derrika Odom
USM
Pac Rim



Adam Pace
USM
Alaska



Justin Patterson
USM
C&E Europe



Matthew Patterson
USM
California



Andrea Rodgers
ICC
California



Lindsay Rogers
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Pac Rim



Kyle Rosas
BMC
Alaska



Tuesday Rowland
BMC
C&E Europe



Christian Russell
BMC
Maine



Tyler Sanders
UM
S America



Randle Scruggs
DSU
Pac Rim



Cass Sellers
CO-LIN
S America



Venchenza Settles
BMC
California



Leah Shackelford
UM
Pac Rim



Michelle Shackelford
USM
Tennessee



Sam Sullivan
MSU
Pac Rim



Sara Tanner
MSU
S America



Chesney Tedder
MERIDIAN
Massachusetts



Beth Thomas
ICC
California



Elizabeth Thomas
MSU
New York



Christopher Thompson
JCJC
C&E Europe



Jenny Thorn
DSU
Colorado



Mary Thornburg
MSU
Pac Rim



Whitney Tyler
UM
S America



Pavel Urruchi
WCU
South America



Daniel Van Court
CCCC
California



Nathan Young
BMC
C&E Europe



Albee Zhang
HINDS
Montana

Jessica Humphreys, ICC, Pac Rim
Mike Reynolds, UM, Seattle
Kayla Swindoll, UM, Canada

No Picture Available

SEMESTER MISSIONARIES



Allyson Barden
MSU
Western Europe



Wesley Remkus
MSU
Africa

Trent Ricks, MSU, Pac Rim
Scott Thomas, UM, South America

No Picture Available

Pray this day for...

MAY 8-20, 2009

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning: Great is Your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul. "Therefore I have hope in Him." Lamentations 3:22-24

Mother's Day
Pray for mothers who are raising children in our morally challenging times. Pray for children's hearts to be receptive to Biblical values. Pray for families to teach Biblical values to their children.

Pray for a team from Philadelphia Baptist Church in Wesson who will be working in East Asia among an unreached people group to bring aid to orphans on May 18-28.

Pray for Elizabeth Thurmond, associate BSU director at Ole Miss as she travels to Peru for the purpose of evangelism, discipleship and summer missionary orientation on May 11-June 9.

NAMB Commissioning Celebration, Morrison Heights BC, Clinton, 7 p.m. (MM); (2) Mississippi Ministers' Golf Tournament, Pearl, 18th-19th (CAC); (3) Senior Adult Retreat, FBC, Holly Springs, 18th-19th (D&FM).

Pray for: (1) a college student team from FBC, Jackson, participating in evangelism in the African country of Botswana on May 11-24; (2) a student team from Mississippi State University BSU as they serve in Tanzania on May 11-23.

Pray for: (1) a team from William Carey BSU who will be involved in church planting in Peru on May 18-29.

Pray for: (1) Thomas VanLandingham as he works in evangelism in Tokyo, Japan, on May 13-Aug. 8; (2) Pray for a team of 17 led by FBC, Grenada, doing medical care and evangelism in Ukraine on May 21-30.

On May 19-30 a team from Southwest Community College BSU and a team from Delta State University BSU are traveling to East Asia to do ESL and evangelism among university students. Pray for opportunities to share Christ.

Pray for the director of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College and his wife as they explore unreached peoples in the region of North Africa and the Middle East on May 14-28.

(1) Senior Adult Retreat, FBC, Louisville, 21st-22nd (D&FM); (2) Pray for two teams from Ingram Baptist Church in Baldwin traveling to northern Russia to do evangelism on May 21-30 and June 4-13.

Pray for a team of 17 led by FBC, Grenada, as they do medical care and evangelism in Ukraine on May 21-30.

Pray for a student team from Mississippi College BSU as they travel and participate in cultural exchange and evangelism in a country in the Pacific Rim region on May 15-June 1.

(1) Christian Education Clinic, Woolmarket BC, Biloxi (D&FM); (2) Three members from Longview Point BC in Hernando are traveling to Uganda to be involved in leadership training. Pray for the team as they go and serve on May 8-19.

(1) "Fueled by Faith" Professional Women's Event, Garaywa Camp & Conference Center (wMu); (2) State Singles Retreat, Central Hills Baptist Retreat, 16th-17th (D&FM).



WHEREVER HE LEADS

Margaret Packey Offering for Senior Missions

Colossians 4:2-5 (paraphrase)

- Devote yourselves to prayer and thanksgiving (v2)
- Share the message of Christ expectantly (v3-4)
- Make the most of every ministry opportunity (v5)

THE MARGARET PACKEY OFFERING

For more information, contact David Michel
at (800) 748-1651, ext. 231.

www.mbccb.org

Send an MK a card!

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MISS LAUREN E. TABOR
Parents: Michael and Jeana
South America

7/13/89
MR. JOSHUA BROWN
Parents: John & Claudia
CESA

7/17/01
MISS CHRISTINA BEAMAN
Parents: Brad & Lenora
Last Frontier

7/17/96
MR. GARRETT BRIDGES
Parents: Randy & Kim
South America

7/18/08
MR. BENJAMIN WORTHY
Parents: Charles & Shannon
Western Europe

7/26/96
MR. Joshua
Parents: J & P
Restricted

FOR SECURITY,
cards will
be forwarded.

Please send all to:

Child's name,
Parent's name,
MBCB wMu
MK Birthdays,
PO Box 530,
Jackson MS 39205

PLEASE NOTE:

Church members may
send a package of
cards together;
cards do not
have to be sent
individually
to the wMu.

HOUSE TOPS

BIBLE DRILLS



1. Holly Church



2. Liberty Church



3a. Ackerman Church children



3b. Ackerman Church youth

1. Holly Church, Alcorn County, recognizes its Bible drill participants: Nathan Hodum, children's driller; Ty Dickson and Jordan Dickson, youth drillers.

2. Liberty Church, Flowood, recognizes its Bible Buddies and Bible drillers. These drillers participated in the state drill Apr. 18.

3. Ackerman Church, Ackerman, recognizes its Bible drillers: Children, Halea Wood, Ashton Beals, Leanna Carter, Jenifer Bigley, Logan Carter, and Hayes Wood; youth, Courtney Blaine, Dayna Presley, Ellen Graves, Jessica Wilson, and Victoria Shanks.

4. Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto recognizes its Bible drillers, Kara Beth Crosby and Jesse Freeman.

5. Highland Church, Natchez, recognizes its Bible drillers: Denise Collier, Nathaniel Mullins, Kimberly Collier, and Hannah Mullins.

6. Fellowship Church, Bellefontaine recognizes its Bible drillers: Brynn Latham, Rica Robertson, Carolina Denley, and Paul Vaughan.

7. Chester Church, Ackerman, recognizes its Bible drillers.



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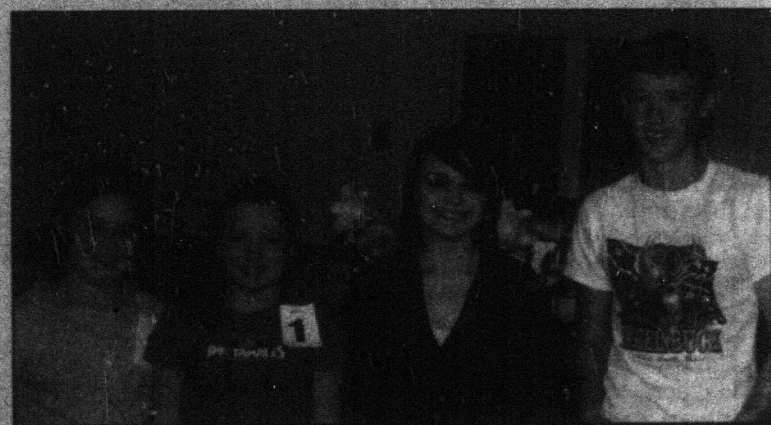
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4. Calvary Church



6. Fellowship Church



7a. Chester Church youth



7. Chester Church children

JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. Williamsville Church, Williamsville is hosting the ABA Family Celebration, May 16, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., featuring music, a ventriloquist, puppets, a western comedian, games, hot dogs and hamburgers, and exhibitors with give-aways.

2. Mt. Pisgah Church, Tallahatchie County, ordained David Stroup as deacon Apr. 19.

**Visit us online at
www.mbc.org**

JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. **Park Haven Church, Laurel**, held their 6th annual drive-through crucifixion Apr. 3 and 4, with five people receiving Christ. Shown are the participants.

2. **Women on Mission, First Church, Pascagoula**, recently sewed clothing for the mission, **Children Hemmed In Prayer**, with 172 dresses and 91 pairs of pants. Shown are the participants.

3. **First Church, Flora**, broke ground on their new education building for children and youth Mar. 15. The building will house classrooms and a large meeting and activity room, and will be two stories with 20,000 square feet. Shown are the participants in the groundbreaking ceremony.

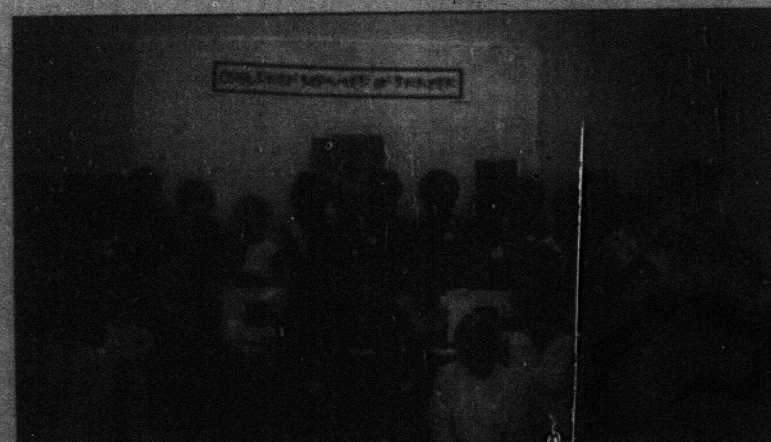
4. **Crossgates Church, Brandon**, will host a National Day of Prayer service at the church May 7, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., with pastor David Jett and a video message from Congressman Gregg Harper. Free box lunch from Chick-Fil-A provided. For information, call (601) 825-2562 or visit www.crossgates.org.

5. **Concord Church, Booneville**, will have a catfish supper May 8, 5-7 p.m., with an auction of new items and homemade cakes.

6. **Corinth Church, Heidelberg**, will host the Barber Brothers Music Ministry May 9, 7 p.m. A love offering will be taken.



1. Park Haven Church



2. First Church, Pascagoula



3. First Church, Flora

COLLEGE NEWS

1. **William Carey University** will break ground for phase I of the new College of Osteopathic Medicine Thursday, May 7 at 1:30 p.m. at the construction site near Thomas Business Building on the Hattiesburg campus. The WCU-COM will be the thirtieth such school in the U.S. and is anticipated to open in the fall of 2010. More than 100 million patients visit doctors of osteopathic medicine (D.O.s) each year. Fifteen percent of those D.O.s practice in small towns and rural areas. The public is invited to attend this significant event. A reception will follow the groundbreaking. For more information call (601) 318-6495.

2. The NAIA has announced the host sites for the 2009 NAIA Baseball National Championship Opening Round, scheduled for May 12-15. Out of a pool of 15 potential hosts, William Carey University has been selected based on standards set by the National Administrative Council (NAC) and the hosts' geographic location.

3. **William Carey University** president Tommy King announced that there would be no increase in tuition for the 2009-2010 academic year.

4. Two Southern Baptist leaders, Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), and Charles "Chuck" Kelley, Jr., presi-

dent of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS), will speak at graduation ceremonies at William Carey University in Hattiesburg and New Orleans. Futral will address 182 of the 658 students at the ceremony honoring graduates of the master's programs on the Hattiesburg campus May 15 at 7 p.m. in the Smith Auditorium. Kelley will address 52 nursing undergraduate and graduate students May 22 at 6 p.m. in Leavell Chapel on the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary campus.

5. President Bettye Rogers Coward announced today that Blue Mountain College would become a tobacco-free campus effective May 1.

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. **Concord Church, Booneville**: Homecoming and Mother's Day program, May 10; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch; Robert E. Walker, pastor.

2. **Clear Branch Church, Wesson**: Homecoming, May 17; service, 9 a.m. - noon, followed by dinner on the grounds; Guy Burke, speaker; Crystal River, music.

3. **Wayside Church, Scobey**: Homecoming, May 17; services, 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch; Fletcher Moorman, speaker; John Caldwell, music.

4. **Causeyville Church, Meridian**: Homecoming, May 17; services, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish

lunch; Jessie Napp, speaker; Lind Hagwood, music.

5. **Moss Hill Church, New Albany**: Homecoming, May 17; services, 10:30 a.m.; Stacy McCollum, speaker; Servants Quartet, music.

6. **Eureka Church, Sandhill**: 125th Homecoming, May 24; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch and singing; Roger Laird, speaker.

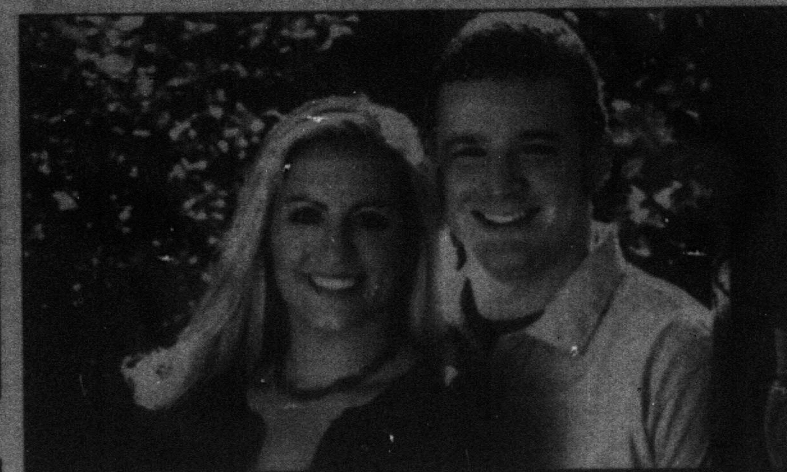
7. **Roundaway Church, Doddsville**: Homecoming, May 24; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by noon meal.

The Baptist Record
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205

STAFF CHANGES

1. **West Shady Grove Church, Eupora**, has called John Windell Lancaster as pastor.

2. **Forest Church, Forest**, has called Josh Raybon as minister of youth and education. Shown are Raybon and his wife, Candace.



2. The Raybons

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Hannah: Ideals of Motherhood

1 Samuel 1:1-2, 10-11, 17-18, 21-28; 2:1-2

By Arthur Story

This week, we continue in our series of character studies from Scripture by looking at Hannah and the Ideals of Motherhood that she exemplified. Hannah's life is a timely study for two reasons. First, this Sunday is the day we celebrate Mother's Day. The day when families throughout our nation will honor their mothers. Second, studying Hannah's life is timely because we live in a nation that has flawed perceptions of motherhood that are based on the lives of celebrities, talk show hosts, politicians, and others who are being heralded as models of motherhood.

In our study of Hannah's life we will identify four characteristics of a godly mother. Even though this lesson focuses on mothers and is written to mothers, these characteristics apply to both mothers and fathers.

Hannah's Sorrow (1:1-10)

The first characteristic of a godly mother revealed in Hannah's life is a longing for children. Hannah longed for children but remained childless for years and as a result she was filled with sorrow. Hannah's sorrow over her childlessness was compounded by the cruel tormenting about her childlessness by her husband's second wife, Peninnah.

No one reading this lesson would be tempted to use a woman's childlessness to intentionally cause her sorrow. Nonetheless, each of us should be thoughtful about how we handle ourselves around childless women in order to avoid unintentionally hurting them. Years ago on Mother's Day, I went to the pulpit to offer a special prayer for mothers as a part of the morning service. As I looked out at the congregation, I saw a young couple in the church that had been



Story

women that long for children but are currently sorrowful because of their childlessness.

Hannah's Supplication (1:10-11, 17-18)

The second characteristic of a godly mother revealed in Hannah's life is prayerfulness. In her pain over her childlessness, Hannah went to God because there was nothing she could do in her own strength to create the child that she so deeply desired. This is an essential issue for those who are childless today. While medical technology has advanced astronomically in the previous decades and many breakthroughs have been made in helping couples conceive children, it's important to remember that God alone is the author of life.

In addition to praying to God for a son, Hannah made a

commitment to give her son back to God. Here Hannah reveals another important issue that every Christian mother needs to remember; God has a purpose for His children. Women that are blessed to be mothers have been entrusted with the responsibility of raising a child and then releasing him/her to serve God. Since God is the giver of life, it is important for every mother to remember that the child she prayed for ultimately belongs to God. A tragic mistake made by too many Christian mothers is to pray for a child, commit him/her to God, and then act as if they have no responsibility to God in raising that child.

Hannah's Surrender (2:1-28)

The third characteristic of a godly mother revealed in Hannah's life is surrender. Hannah prayed for God to give her a son and committed to God that she would give him back to Him. When Samuel was born, Hannah nurtured him and prepared for the day she would release him to God. Once the day came, she willingly took Samuel and presented him to Eli.

One of the best decisions a

mother can make, even before a child is conceived, is to willingly surrender her child's life to God's will. Every mother's passion for her child should be for God's will in his/her life above all else. Mothers should never allow their desire for their child to live close to them, or follow a certain career choice, or engage in a particular activity, etc. to become a stumbling block for God's will in that child's life.

Hannah's surrendering of Samuel to God's will is a testimony to today's mothers not to seek to control their children's lives but rather to allow God to control their lives. Hannah recognized God's hand in her pregnancy and released Samuel to God's will.

Hannah's Satisfaction (2:1-2)

The fourth characteristic of a godly mother revealed in Hannah's life is satisfaction. Hannah's joy in life didn't come from being the mother of a child. It came from God.

A godly mother longs for her child, is prayerful, surrenders to God's will, and is satisfied in God alone.

Story is Minister of Education, First Church, Louisville.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Rebellion: A Path to Ruin

Micah 1:1-2:13

By Beth S. Bowman

Rebellious, out of control lives are prominent in the news each day. Adults who defy authority through misuse of company funds and others who demonstrate their rebellion by exploiting the innocent are a few of today's headlines. In addition, we read about young adults who are determined to express their insurgence through violence on unsuspecting victims in public facilities. Is anyone interested in following God? Is there a cluster of Godly, holy people who want to live life God's way? Micah must have asked these same questions as he begins his judgment on the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.

Revelation from the Lord (Micah 1:1)

Micah was a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah. He was from the city of Moresheth. This city was about 25 miles southwest of

Jerusalem on the border lands between Judah and the Philistines. Micah ministered during around 740-700 B.C. God delivered messages to both to Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah) through Micah. This introduction in which the nations were identified serves to bring the two guilty parties to attention as in a courtroom trial setting.

Response to Rebellion (Micah 1:2-5)

God communicates to His people His displeasure at their disobedience and that judgment is eminent. The imagery that God uses in verses 3 and 4 served to communicate to Israel and Judah that there would be no escape from and no defense for God's judgment. If the mountains and valleys cannot stand before Him, what hope does sinful, rebellious man have? Micah leaves no doubt that God's wrath would be



Bowman

visited on both the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms. Just as God's judgment of Israel's rebellion is documented in His word; we need to be reminded today that God does not ignore sin, especially the sin of those who claim Him as their God.

Results of Rebellion (Micah 1:6-9)

The Northern Kingdom would experience God's wrath first. Micah refers to the idols and the harlotry of Israel, making it clear that what ultimately triggered God's judgment was the choice His people had made to follow other Gods. All of the worldly gain Israel had accumulated would be stripped away. Micah prophesied the coming judgment on Samaria, the capital city of Israel. This was fulfilled in 722 B.C. when Samaria fell to the Assyrians and was completely destroyed. Sadly, the fortunes amassed by Israel would be used by the Assyrians to build their own idols. In graphic imagery, Micah expressed his heartbreak over the pending judgment

awaiting Israel. God expects His people to be faithful to Him and be mindful of their influence on the world.

Ruin of Rebellion (Micah 2:1-4:8)

God was not only displeased with Israel's apostasy, but with the unethical behavior they demonstrated toward one another. Micah describes premeditated deceitfulness by the powerful and wealthy which is then carried out on the innocent, even with violence. Self centered covetousness is indicated as the motivation for these sins against humanity. God was including the sins Israel committed against one another in His indictment of the nation. As if turning their back on God was not enough, Israel had now chosen to act unjustly toward each other. God had warned Israel not to commit the very crimes that He was now using to pronounce their judgment. It seems incomprehensible that Israel would choose to blatantly disobey God's clear instructions and warnings.

What a difficult message Micah was given to deliver to the people. God's judgment was coming and it would not be

pleasant or avoidable. While it is easy to look back and simply ask Israel, "How could you squander away the blessing and favor of God?" Scripture reveals the downward spiral of the chosen nation that ultimately ends in their expulsion from the Promised Land.

Are we any different than Israel? As individuals and as a nation do we not often choose to violate the clear instructions of God? It reminds me of the statement, "If you do not learn from history, you are destined to repeat it." What can we learn from the tragic choices of Israel? First of all, God desires and deserves our unwavering devotion toward Him. Second, we are to be His witnesses, ambassadors in the world in which we live. And finally, how we treat one another is a direct reflection on the status of our relationship with Him. Does the way we worship and serve God, glorify Him in our circles of influence, and treat one another demonstrate that we are God's people?

Bowman is Minister of Connection, First Church, Brandon.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted.



Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all

photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Parker and Rhodes

1. Pheba Church, Pheba, recognized James Parker for 50 years in ministry. Parker preached his first sermon 50 years ago at Pheba. He was honored with a luncheon, a concert by the Parker Brothers Quartet, and a plaque. Shown are Parker, left, and pastor Terry Rhodes.

2. Plainway Church, Laurel, celebrated homecoming Apr. 5. Ministers participating included pastor J. Nonnie Jefcoat, pastor emeritus Harold C. Ishee, and Charles Jones. Shown are Jefcoat, Ishee, and Jones.



2. Plainway Church



3. Enterprise Church



4. First Church Kosciusko deacon ordination

3. The GAs and moms of Enterprise Church, Enterprise, recently participated in the Mom & Me event at Camp Garaywa. Shown are the participants.

4. First Church, Kosciusko, ordained Jay L. Price and David Roos as deacons Apr. 19. Shown with the deacons is Barry C. Corbett, pastor.

5. First Church, Tutwiler, was honored Nov. 16, 2008, by the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission for 100 years of service for Christ. The Church Centennial Committee was made up most of the church's active members, including the C. Thomases, the B. Wrights, the C. Bruisters, B. Christensen, V. Grissom, J. Hillman, the R. Smiths, E. Burton, the M. Pharises, and D. Fowler.

6. Pineview Church, Hattiesburg, recently ordained Kevin Carter and Allen Moffett as deacons. Shown are Garland King, Amiee Carter, Carter, Moffett, Anita Moffett, and Brian Cleveland.

7. First Church, Byram, held their annual Pinewood Derby Race Apr. 29. Shown, front row, are Ryan Breaux, Darbie Blansett, Christopher Bunch, and Brandon Hedrick; back row, Alex Howell, Jayden Smith, Peyton Owens (first place), Luke Walker (second place), and Clayton Mathis (third place).

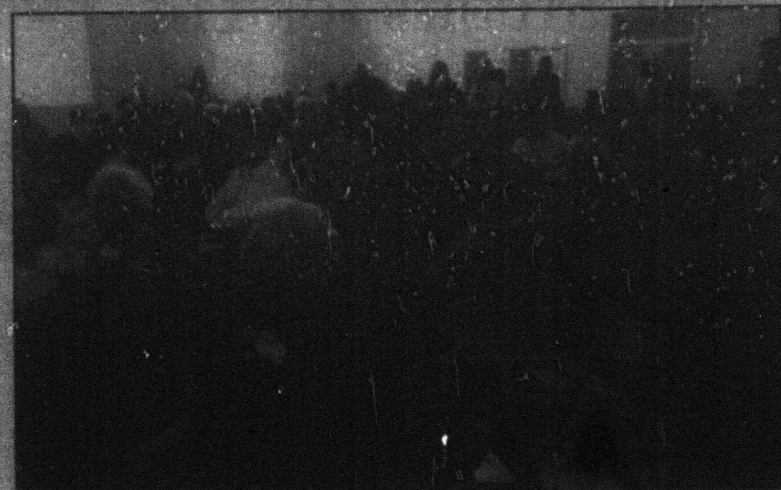
8. Faith Church, Ovett, is hosting a gospel sing May 9, 6 p.m., featuring Blue Harmony.

9. Oak Hill Church, Lauderdale Association, recently burned the note on their new facility. The church owed \$560,000 after moving in the building in 2004 and was able to pay off the debt in less than five years.

10. Nationally recognized cookbook authors Gwen McKee and Barbara Moseley will be the featured speakers at a Ladies Night Out Banquet on May 12 at First Church, Florence. The dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. and all area ladies are invited to attend. Tickets may be purchased for \$10 by calling the church at (601) 845-7578. Childcare is also available on request.

11. Moss Hill Church, New Albany: VBS, June 1 - 5, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

12. First Church, Ocean Springs, hosted Ruth Carlisle (right), 101-year-old



5. First Church, Tutwiler



6. Pineview Church deacon ordination



7. First Church, Byram



12. Carlisle and Carr

missionary emeritus recently. She is shown with Kristy Carr, WMU's Volunteer Connection coordinator, who had come to speak to the senior adults at the church.

13. The Family Celebration at Neshoba Baptist Center, Philadelphia, scheduled for May 9, has been cancelled. For more information, call (601) 656-1820.